

THE MUSICAL WORLD,

A MAGAZINE OF
ESSAYS, CRITICAL AND PRACTICAL,
AND WEEKLY RECORD OF
Musical Science, Literature, and Intelligence.

“Ἡ μὲν ἁρμονία ἀόρατόν τι καὶ ἀσώματον,
καὶ πάγκαλόν τι καὶ θεῶν ἐστίν.”

PLAT. *Phædo*. sec. xxxvi.

Music is a something viewless and incorporeal,
an all-gracious and a God-like thing.

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A heretic has arisen, to whose doctrines we invite the attention of the orthodox readers of “the Musical World.” It is our intention to give, commencing with next week, a translation of his forthcome and forthcoming diatribes, and we shall be happy to find some of our correspondents taking the matter up; it being of no consequence to us to which side they incline. The truth will be elicited all the better for a strong collision.

The leading axioms of this heresy are, that MOZART is to be ranked in the second order of composers, and that a time will come when he will sink to his level. M. JULES MAUREL (so the heretic is named) undertakes to prove that MOZART has little originality, and that, in every species of composition, he is far excelled by other composers, ancient and modern. “MOZART,” writes M. JULES, “has neither the beautiful melody of the Italians, the powerful declamation of the French lyrical drama, nor the scientific invention of the Germans: to the first, he appears a harsh and fantastic melodist; to the second, an insipid and monotonous one; undramatic and unpoetic to the third. Yet is he a cosmopolite, having borrowed from every school. Wherefore no school has borrowed from him. Wherefore, too, he is styled an *inimitable* genius.” A witty and a pleasant rogue this M. JULES MAUREL!

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FAMILIAR LETTERS FROM AMSTERDAM.

(From the German of C. Kossmaly.)

Continued from page 270.

LETTER II.

Among the numerous fixed annual concerts, those of the society called *Felix meritis* are distinguished both as to quantity and quality by their artistical worth and completeness, and the genuine manner in which they are conducted. The orchestra—which is, as it were, an extract of the most distinguished practical musicians of the day, and which is, in consequence of such an excellent combination, the best and most select that can be heard—displays itself very advantageously under the guidance of M. J. B. Van Bree, by its power, confidence, fire, and *à plomb*. This is confirmed by the performance of those great works which are exclusively instrumental; those overtures and symphonies which are played with a zeal and earnestness of purpose truly religious, and which we have not heard done better, even in Germany.

M. Van Bree, a virtuoso on the violin, who has acquired here a well-established reputation grounded on repeated successes, has lately by two operas, *Sappho* and *Der Bandit*—by some of the greater sort of orchestral works (an overture and a mass, the merit of which latter is acknowledged in Germany)—and by the beautiful song, *Adolphe et Marie*, given proofs of a talent in composition which awakens the highest degree of attention in the musical world, and justifies the most sanguine expectations.

Here, besides the truly cosmopolitan symphonies of Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven, we heard symphonies by Feska Maurer and Romberg; overtures by Romberg (*Mendoza*), Alois Schmidt, Weber (*Euryanthe*, the *Ruler of the Spirits*, *Oberon*), Mehul (*Joseph*), F. Ries (*Test overture*), F. Mendelssohn Bartholdy (*Fingal's Cave*), and Lindpainter (*Abraham's Sacrifice*). The charge of the rest of the evening's amusement lies with virtuosos, partly native, and partly foreigners of high standing who are on their tour. It is impossible that all can be sterling, all of musical import, when here, as well as everywhere else, the charms of novelty and variety must be considered. Contrasts are always beneficial to art, and allow the really beautiful, felicitous, and great, to stand out sharply in opposition to the trifling and infelicitous. As among the best solos we may mention several pieces sung by M. Vrugt (the tenor engaged expressly for the *Felix meritis* concerts), as for example the well-known air from Spohr's *Zemira and Azor*, the romance from Halevy's *Guido and Ginevra*, and some songs, for which M. Vrugt seems peculiarly adapted, though we, at present, refrain from passing a complete judgment on this vocalist. Then there were the performances of the violinist Ernst, of Paris—*e. g.* his variations on the Dutch popular song, and the debut of Cecilia and Richard Mulder, a brother and sister, the former thirteen and the latter seventeen years old. A capriccio for the pianoforte, by Richard Mulder, displayed a good foundation, a well-grounded knowledge; considering his years, and even traces of originality, which he particularly showed towards the end, by a conclusion which, to remain true to the fundamental idea, differed entirely from all precedents, and in which all passages and *lours de force* were shunned, while it softly died away. Besides these, M. M. Pot de Vin, on the horn; the brothers L. Kleins, on the violin, J. W. Kleins, on the clarionet; Mme. Buys and Mme. J. J. C. de Boer have distinguished themselves as well on account of the sterling contents as of the variety of the programme. As the greater part of the artists, I have named have appeared in concerts of their own, I reserve my judgment for a future opportunity, when I shall go more into detail. A word or two, however, on the performance of L. V. Beethoven's ninth symphony, with choruses, at the first of the *Felix meritis* concerts, which excited here a sensation, as it has done elsewhere. It requires not especial explanation; Beethoven did not write for the theoretical hair-splitters and knights of the quill, the infinite number of nose-screwers, shoulder-shruggers, and "know-betters;" and hence we can easily see why so many souls published in a pocket-form, men in an incomplete edition, whose whole revenue of mind cannot cover their original deficiencies love to peck at and deny Beethoven, being owls in cri-

ticism, who dreaming and vegetating on in the delirium and half-ness (*halfbeit*) of an ever jejune "dilettantism" cannot, with their purblind eyes, comprehend the master's wondrously profound combinations. These cannot follow the mighty flight of his genius; and because the great symphonist, obeying the overflowing consciousness of his own power and his higher immediate inspirations, has ventured on many a daring novelty, which may not have been sanctioned by their home-baked fraction of an understanding, their dwarf conceptions pinched into the Spanish boots of rule (which exceptions they would use as a general standard); in a word, because they cannot mete the giant with the measure of their own insignificance, the tame, cockney, ell-measure of their own capacity, they carry their blindness so far as to summon him to their critical tribunal, and hurl anathemas upon him from the vatican of their own infallibility.

Amsterdam, May, 1839.

LETTER III.

After the *Felix meritis*, the concerts of the Society *Blas en Stryklust*, which are held in the Odeon deserve honourable mention. Here a select, and, for the most part, a well-manned orchestra is also to be found, the chief object being the performance of works belonging to the instrumental department, as the name of the society seems to imply.

Felix meritis and *Blas en Stryklust* occupy the first rank among the established annual concerts. Besides these, there are several musical societies, though of subordinate rank, where the free, self-conscious, and independent performances and expressions of art vanish, to make way for studies and experiments, or, in other words, where art leaves off and "dilettantism" begins. *Vriendschap en Toonkunst* is the name of the most important of these institutions, and is, as it were, the asylum and focus of the amateurs of the day. Nevertheless, Beethoven's symphonies (the *Eroica*), and some overtures by Spohr and Lindpainter are played here with care, and indeed very well, comparatively speaking. Then there is the Society *Toon en Zanglust*, chiefly instituted for male voices, which, notwithstanding it is very numerous, can only be regarded as in its first state of helpless infancy and early development when compared with similar German societies, although the exertions of M. Weber, the singing master and director, are not to be denied. Neither with respect to the works that are executed, nor with respect to the execution itself, has this society done anything of very great importance for art. In the first place, a complete whole is never heard, but only bits; incomplete arrangements from operas, disjointed fragments, which, with a vast deal of labour and economy, are adapted to the limited means of the society. Instead of oratorios by Handel, Haydn, Beethoven, Klein, Mendelssohn, Löwe, or the works of Spohr, Weber, Ries, Neukomm, or Schneider, to which such societies, in other places, solely and exclusively direct their attention; here we have dished up such delectable *chef-d'œuvres* as the introduction to Bellini's *Romeo e Giuletta*; finales from *Zampa*, or the *Night Lodging*; *ensembles* from *Il Crociato*, or *La Prison d'Edinbourg*, and even these are frightfully amputated and badly arranged. Hence, there is perceivable in this society a want of good; clear young voices, and it might with justice be said—"In the *Toon en Zanglust* there is no singing, but only screaming and squabbling." The other director, M. Halberstadt, of Altona, who has been hitherto occupied with the conduct of solo and instrumental pieces is a young man of no mean talent as a composer, and deserves laudatory and exhilarating mention as a musician both theoretically and practically cultivated.

Amsterdam, May, 1839.

(The fourth letter will follow.)

ROR YOUR ITALIANOS!

BY A MAN BEHIND HIS AGE.

(From Blackwood)

"Ror your Italianos! for my part, I loves a simple ballat!" At the risk of being excommunicated from civilized society for the next twenty years, I honour the memory of the country mayoress, who gave vent to her outraged nationality

in that most passionate and unsophisticated ejaculation. The spirit which gave birth to it was British to the backbone—a despiser of fashions, and a hater of Frenchmen. I can picture her to my mind's eye, seated by the side of her magisterial spouse on the front bench in the Town-Hall, glorious in crimson velvet and orange trimmings, majestic in feathers and furbelows, pre-eminent in paste, and magnificent in mosaic gold—listening, with open mouth and kindling eye, to the “uptrilled strain” of some one of those great metropolitan stars, which every now and then condescend to shoot like meteors through our rural hemisphere, to turn the heads and empty the pockets of the wondering lieges by their “most sweet voices.” I can fancy her speechless astonishment at the first burst of the unknown tongue upon her unprepared ear—her glance of dignified expostulation at the unheeding man of semiquavers—and, finally, her indignation at the audacity which offers such an insult to her understanding bursting forth, uncontrolled and uncontrollable, in that most energetic of anathemas—“Rot your Italianos!”

How far my taste and that of the worthy lady in question might coincide in the selection of our “simple ballads,” I cannot of course presume to decide; but, however we might happen to differ in the application, in principle we are one:—Rot your Italianos!—give me something I can understand.

I shall never forget the first time I ever went to the Italian Opera. Indeed her Majesty's Theatre (alas! that the theatre, *par excellence* her Majesty's, should be the only theatre in London where her Majesty's mother-tongue is never spoken!) was the first playhouse in which I ever set my foot, and my anticipations were magnificent—though to attempt to describe them, after Charles Lambe's delightful account of a similar epoch in his existence, would be worse than idle. Tap, tap, tap, went the conductor's baton, and crash went the whole orchestra at once;—but what was the overture to one whose eyes were riveted upon the curtain, and whose whole soul was wrapt in expectation of the wonders it concealed? I have listened with delight since then to many a noble overture; but at that moment, had it been an angel's lyre, as far as I was concerned, its strings would have been swept unheeded. To me the play, and the play only, was the attraction—of course, I need not say that of the nature of an opera I had but a very imperfect conception. I knew that there would be a good deal of singing, but I had no notion there was to be nothing else; and I knew also that I should not understand the language to be spoken: but I thought that, if the performance were but true to nature, I might be able, at any rate, to make a tolerably good guess at what was going on, and I pleased myself not a little by the anticipation of my own success in this conjectural species of interpretation. Well, the overture, endless though it seemed, nevertheless gave the lie to appearances, and ended at last. Up went the curtain—and behold! a gentleman with an unexceptionable moustache, and a spick-and-span new suit of “complete steel,” amusing himself with parading backwards and forwards before a castle gate only covered with ivy, and chanting at the top of his voice, in what Hamlet calls “very choice Italian.” Now I, knowing nothing in the world of “that soft bastard Latin,” and not being beforehand acquainted with the details of the story to be enacted, very naturally concluded, from the armour and the uplifted voice, that the worthy gentleman—for he was too smart for a warder—was somebody or other of moderate personal courage, who was supposed to be going about his business in a neighbourhood of indifferent reputation, and singing as he went, either to let any lurking clerk of St. Nicholas understand that he was by no means timorous, or, for the old classical reason, because he happened to have no superfluity of broad pieces in his breeches' pocket, and consequently nothing to apprehend. As I afterwards learned, I never was more mistaken in my life—but that is anticipating. Well, after a proper quantity of walking, and ditto of singing, enter on the opposite side another gentleman (whom, for the sake of perspicuity, I will call Gentleman No. 2), with a drawn sword and inflamed countenance. Suddenly perceiving Gentleman No. 1, he stops, and thunders forth three lines of double bass, to which the individual so addressed responds in twice as many of counter-tenor, drawing his weapon also at the close of the sixth; whereupon Gentleman No. 2 turns his back unceremoniously upon Gentleman No. 1, and fortifies his spirits with a considerable

quantity of gesticulation, and a trifle more of the double-bass. As it was now pretty evident that he was working himself up into a very murderous disposition towards Gentleman No. 1, I was delighted to observe the Christian forbearance of the latter individual, in not taking advantage of so favourable an opportunity for smiting Gentleman No. 2 under the fifth rib at once; but I suppose that he, like a swan, had a sort of presentiment of his approaching latter end, and was determined to have another song before he took his departure: for, when Gentleman No. 2 had ceased, and was most heroically "winking and holding out his iron" before his eyes, he very composedly treated us to another five minutes, in a somewhat more warlike key; and then at it they went like a couple of gamecocks, till the predestined Gentleman No. 1 received a lunge in tierce, which I thought must have most effectually and immediately given him his quietus. But no;—rearing himself on his elbow, and fixing on Gentleman No. 2 a glance of the most withering scorn and intense detestation, he spake once again, and to my extreme astonishment, like Southey's Enchantress, "still his speech was song,"—clear, loud, sustained, "as though he felt no wound," until suddenly the uplifted voice and body fell together, and the unfortunate Gentleman No. 1 breathed his last in B flat.

I would go on to tell how there came on a "fayre ladye," weeping and wailing, and tearing her "lang lang yellow hair," and how she knelt by the side of the defunct Gentleman No. 1, and how she endeavoured to recal what the newspapers denominate "the vital spark," by a bravura of a quarter of an hour's duration; and how an elderly gentleman, with a cracked voice and eracium to match, which latter was his only excuse for not knowing better, made dishonourable proposals to the said fair one, in a very long-winded solo for a Sexagenarian; and how, after much sorrow and trouble, the lady, towards the middle of the third act, after singing a passionate song over a small phial of poison, swallowed the contents at a gulp; and how the audience were treated to a specimen of an Italian coronach by fifteen young maidens, all with tresses carefully dishevelled, and as many serving-men in disordered liveries, headed by a Coryphæus in the person of the aforementioned old gentleman, by this time driven by remorse into a state of "very midsummer madness." But I should seem as one that mocketh to many a worthy and simple-minded country cousin, and I forbear. I have never been to the Italian Opera from that day to this. I look upon it as the greatest outrage to common sense that ever was perpetrated. I regard a ballet with a far more lenient, and even favourable eye. The ballet is a great philosophical experiment to ascertain the maximum degree of indecency which the eye of the most moral public is able to endure without flinching; but which, alas! seems destined, like too many meritorious undertakings, never to accomplish its object. My friend the mayoress would doubtless have preferred an old-fashioned "three-some reel" to all the elegant improprieties of the "poetry of dancing."

Honestly and seriously, it gives me more pleasure to hear even a street organ play a simple old English air, than it would to occupy the very choicest stall in the whole Italian Opera-House; and yet (though I fear I shall provoke nearly as many sneers as I shall have readers) I claim to be counted among the lovers of music. The dramatic part of the business is to me so irresistibly ludicrous, that the beauty of the music (and far be it from me to deny that of Italy its due share) is lost and gone in the utter absurdity of the *tout ensemble*. I cannot yield myself to any illusion at a spectacle so unnatural. I can no more sympathize with a hero who lives, loves, eats, drinks, fights, and dies singing, than I can sympathize, like the *Morning Herald* (admirable an editor though he be), with a condemned murderer. I know many a sweet air, from many an opera, which I can drink in, again and again, with ever fresh delight; but it must not be within the walls of a theatre; there must be no tinsel and trappings—no footlights and finery—the air, the whole air, and nothing but the air—no "chromatic tortures" of " quaint recitativos;"—and then I will sit, and cry—"Play on—let me have more of it!" till the fair fingers of the minstrel grow weary of their task, and the silvery voice pleads their excuse so sweetly, that the melody of art is forgotten in that of nature.

A theatre is not, to my thinking, the proper place for vocal music; or, perhaps, it may be nearer the truth to say that vocal music is for the most part, so awk-

wardly introduced in our drama, that I am apt, unthinkingly to find fault with the practice, instead of confining my censure to its abuse. Nine-tenths of the songs which we hear upon the stage are so lugged in by the head and shoulders, that we cannot be surprised if they suffer from the operation. People in plays sing, for the most part, exactly when nobody in his senses would dream of their being musical. Companies of banditti rove about, shouting out a chorus which cannot by any possibility fail to betray their whereabouts; young gentlemen, head over ears in love, chant beneath their mistresses' windows with a strength of lungs which must infallibly awaken the most snoring and somnolent of papas, and wicked little soubrettes display their vocal powers in the drawing-room, at the imminent risk of being turned out of the house at a minute's warning by their justly infuriated "missus." No modern play-wright seems to have the slightest notion that there is a time proper for singing, and a time proper for holding one's tongue. Shakspeare introduced songs, and why shouldn't they? True; but Shakspeare never went a single inch out of his way to accommodate a song. His men and women sing exactly as men and women ought to sing, at the proper time, and in the proper manner; two requisites which we, who sing away, "ab ovo usque ad mala," have most unaccountably lost sight of. I quote the following words from the very last number of *Maga*, without curtailment, partly for the excellence of the criticism, and partly because they supplied the hint for these, my present rude lucubrations:—"Joanna Bailie," says the critic, for he is speaking of no less a name, "takes care to make no people sing in situations in which it is not natural for them to do so; the songs are all sung by those who have little or nothing to act,—[so Amiens, in *As you Like It*.]—and introduced when nothing very interesting is going on; and they are supposed not to be the spontaneous expressions of sentiment in the singer, but, as songs in ordinary life usually are, compositions of other people, which have been often sung before, and which are only generally applicable to the present occasion. In these few words, which are nearly all her own, this great poetess has laid down the principles on which alone can any musical drama be constructed agreeably to nature."

So much for theatrical song-singing; though, by the way, I have yet another crow to pick with it before I leave it, inasmuch as the better the song is sung, the more it tends, by producing an *encore*, to dispel still further the already fading illusion of the stage. The grand object of the drama is, of course, to hold "the mirror up to nature," that it may admire (which it may do without vanity) its own beauties, and see and amend its own follies and deformities. Foremost among its secondary aims, I take to be the endeavour to impress the spectator with a belief, as far as such a thing is possible, that the scenes which pass before his eyes are not fictions but realities—to make him give himself up to the illusion of the moment, annihilating both time and space from the instant the curtain rises—transporting himself through centuries, and across oceans—undergoing a living metempsychosis—now a "royal Dane," and now an "antique Roman,"—and subsiding into his pristine John Bullism only when some second-rate son of the buskin glides delicately from behind the curtain, to announce the entertainments of the morrow. I do not know whether or, no my principle be correct; but, be this as it may, it is that upon which I like to act myself, if the gods would only allow me. But no—the powers of the one-shilling gallery are a straightforward, matter-of fact race of deities, that have no notion of being deluded in any way whatever; tailor outsqueaks tailor, barber out-bravos barber, baker outclaps baker, butcher outwhistles butcher—the play stands still—the actors return to their old attitudes—the song is sung again; and Miss Snevellicci, act as she will, is, for the rest of the evening, Miss Snevellicci, and Miss Snevellicci only. I never yet saw Richard dream or die a second time; but should it ever be the pleasure of the British public to demand such an effort (and there are many things, as far as I see, more improbable), I could regard the exhibition with exactly the same degree of complacency. But I am running away from my friend the mayoress.

I suppose a lady of fashion now-a-days would as soon think of admitting that she did not adore Italian music, as she would of confessing her age. For my part, I look upon our Italianizing dames pretty much as sturdily old Juvenal looked upon the Græcizing patricians—"non possum ferre. Quirites, Græcam

urbem." There is no end to our unnatural adoptions—"Jampridem" Syrus in Tiberim defluxit Orontes"—Italians, and French, and Germans—the Swiss family This, and the Dutch family That, and the Russian family T'other—Chanteurs Montagnards, Siffleurs, and Chin-choppers, Alpine minstrels, and Bohemian minstrels, and minstrels from the Lord knows where; verily, the plague of foreigners is upon us, and of all live plagues defend me from this! Were the evil confined to the boards of the Opera-house, or the purlieus of Leicester Square, I should not mind it so much, though it would still be bad enough. But this is, alas! far from being the case. Read a programme of a fashionable morning concert—the probability is, that you will not find one English song in the list. Walk into a fashionable drawing-room, and ask Miss Mary or Miss Caroline to favour you with a little music—fifty to one she strikes up some Italian rigma role, of which you understand not a syllable, but which you are bound to pronounce the most beautiful thing you ever heard in your life, as you would escape being set down for a greater Goth than even Alaric himself. An English audience, "gaping for wonderment," at a modern morning concert, puts me strongly in mind of a congregation of Roman Catholics at their devotions. They are alike most admiring and devout listeners to a service, of the meaning of which, nine-tenths of them have no more comprehension than a cow has of mathematics. But the evil does not stop at morning concerts and crowded soirées, like the frogs of Egypt, it invades our very chambers, and takes its station unresisted by our parlour firesides—those very citadels of John Bullism—our very children of ten years' old practise bravuras, and prattle of Donizetti.

The honest old English song never was at a greater discount than in this most musical age. We do not get a decent one once a year; and, when we have that luck, it endures only for a week. Our modern fashionable ballads are the most execrable compounds of mawkish sentimentality that ever melted the soul of a nursery-maid—full of pale, high brows, and dark flashing eyes, and long flowing tresses of raven blackness—strong spirit-yearnings, and heart-tempests of appalling violence. Unhappy music appears doomed henceforth to a perpetual state of ancient maidenhood: for there is no longer any "immortal verse" to marry her to. Even good music, when burthened with the trashy words with which these days are afflicted, is, to my thinking, three parts ruined; but this is a matter about which our modern musicians trouble their heads very little—words are made for tunes, not tunes for words; and one would think they were made by contract into the bargain; sometimes they rhyme, and for the most part scan; but as to anything beyond, why, a black swan would be nothing to the rarity. Our list of modern song-writers, (I do not mean mere "metre-ballad-mongers," and Haynes Bayly-ites, but good honest song-writers) is small indeed; of living ones we have scarcely any. Moore seems to think he has done enough, and so he has, for fame; for there is immortality enough and to spare in the Irish melodies. Allan Cunningham has written several stirring strains—why is his pen idle? Poor Captain Morris is dead!—peace to his manes! his songs (and so were Dibdin's) were superb in their way—that is, when men were reasonably well advanced in the second bottle. Of Burns, I fear I may say little, but the name is known in these parts, save to a few. Walter Scott has written some glorious songs, but who sings them? and last, "not least in our dear love," Felicia Hemans has penned some strains of passing beauty, which one would think the world would not let willingly die. Yet are all these passing away silently to their oblivion, to be recalled, now and then, only by such old-fashioned folks as myself and the mayoress.

We English, I suppose, neglect our own music more than any people upon the face of the earth, and with as little reason for so doing. We are the most loan-loving nation under the sun; we borrow pretty nearly everything;—our dresses, our habits of life, and now, at last, our music. We are not an idle people nor a foolish people; but somehow or other we have got hold of a notion that nothing of our own is worth a brass farthing, and that everything belonging to every body else is worth its weight in gold. We go upon tick for taste, and we are put off with an inferior material into the bargain. I never yet heard an overture, or a fantasia, or a fugue, or an aria, that could stand any thing like a comparison with three-fourths of the old Irish and Scottish melodies, which one scarcely

dares call for, for fear of being stared down by a parcel of people who never even heard of their existence. Those of Scotland, in particular, have to me, though I am not Scotchman, an inexpressible charm. I could listen to "Auld Robin Gray," and "Ye banks and braes," and "My love is like the red red rose," and fifty more that I could name, every night of my life, without being weary of them. These, after all, are the strains that come home to our hearts; these are the sounds at which the very falling of a pin is an interruption "grating harsh discord" to our ears—which float around us in our slumbers—which haunt us in our rambles—which are with us in the woods and by the streams, lapping in an elysium of harmony the discordant and jarring passions of our most unmusical "working-day world." The concert room, with its "intricacies of laborious song," moves our wonder and charms our ear; but it stirs not our feelings; we are no more touched by "Vivi tu," much as we may applaud its execution, than we are by the street-minstrel, whom we bribe with a whole penny to bestow his oft-repeated "All round my hat," on the unsuspecting inhabitants of some more distant locality. I cannot enjoy music, any more than I can read poetry in a crowd—except it be our own magnificent National Anthem, or some strain which, stirring us as with the sound of a trumpet, summons up at once in a thousand bosoms other and nobler associations than those which music more generally endeavours to awake; strains at which every heart beats more proudly—to which every tongue bursts forth in involuntary chorus—which kindle to a blaze in our bosoms all the pride, and the honour and the love of our fatherland, which, though they may for a time burn dimly, may never, like the Gebir's fire, be wholly extinguished. To revel in the full luxury of music, I must have no hired minstrel, no crowded benches, no glare of lamps, no "bustle, squeeze, row, gabbery, and jaw;"—I must have a still calm eye, in some quiet bower far removed from the "hum of human cities," with "one fair spirit for my minister" who needs not to ask or to be told what string to strike—one who loves as I love, the "auld world sange" and simple melodies of a more simple generation—one whose purer taste rejects the

"Shakes and flourishes, outlandish things,
That mar, not grace, an honest English song."

but clings still to the "merit, not the less precious that we seldom hear it," the pathetic simplicity which nature prompts—whose heart is in the strain which she wakens, forgetful for the time of external things, and breathing only in its own created atmosphere of harmony. This is to me a banquet at which there is no chance "that appetite should sicken, and so die." To such a feast I would be even selfish enough to wish no fellow guests. I would have no voice to break the spell,—to startle the spirit from its trance of enchantment—to mar with the sounds of earth the tones which bless us with the dreams of heaven.

Our own Shakspeare, in one of the most exquisite productions of his genius, has drawn a lover of music after my own heart. I love that music-loving Duke of Illyria before he has spoken two lines:—

"Now, good Cesario, but that piece of song,
That old and antique song we heard last night;
Methought it did relieve my passion much
More than light airs, and recollected terms,
Of these most briish and giddy-pated times."

"And again,

"Mark it, Cesario—it is old and plain:—
The spinsters, and the knitters in the sun,
And the free maids that weave their thread with bones,
Do wont to sing it."

Yes! Shakspeare has sought for the standard of taste in music in a quarter which may perchance provoke the sneer of the professor; but he has sought it in the true one, for all that—he has sought for it in the people—in the class to whom music is the only one of the fine arts capable of being thoroughly enjoyed;—who turn confused from scientific and perplexing combinations of sound, to some more simple strain which they can feel, and understand, and remember—whose taste is the taste of nature, and therefore the true one.

Coleridge's "Lines composed in a Concert-room," are a host in my favour. Truly, indeed, does he say of the crowds who ordinarily fill these receptacles, "these feel not music's genuine power;" and beautifully does he long to change the "long-breathed singer's uprilled strain," for the melodies of the unnoticed minstrel, whose "Breathes on his flute sad airs, so wild and low
That his own cheek is wet with quiet tears,"
Byron is on my side, notwithstanding he asserts himself to be "a liege and loyal admirer of Italian music." The clever stanza which dashes off the "long evenings of duets and trios," wants the feeling—marred as its effect is by the jingling rhyme—which characterises the following one, in which he speaks of

"The home
Heart-ballads of Green Erin or Gray Highlands,
That bring Lochaber back to eyes that roam
O'er far Atlantic continents or islands;
The cadences of music, which o'ercome
All mountaineers with dreams that they are nigh lands
No more to be beheld but in such visions!"

Yes! it is not the grand crash of the orchestra, or the painful effort of the concert-room—it is not your "Babylon's bravuras" that stir the heart of the wanderer who roams remote, unfriended, melancholy, slow, among strangers in a strange land; but the honest simple strains of the people—homely things which sink deep into the home-sick heart—strains which have cheered his evening hours among friends far away—remembrances of all that man holds dearest—of friends, of kindred, of love, of home. There is many a hardy Swiss heart that melts at the *Ranz des Vaches*, to which the overture to *Guillaume Tell* would be an unintelligible and powerless congregation of sounds.

"Music," says Addison, "is to deduce its laws and rules from the general sense and taste of mankind, and not from the principles of the art itself; or, in other words, the taste is not to conform to the art, but the art to the taste. Music is not designed to please only chromatic ears, but all that are capable of distinguishing harsh from agreeable notes. A man of an ordinary ear is a judge whether a passion is expressed in proper sounds, and whether the melody of those sounds be more or less pleasing."

To these "chromatic ears" it is the fashion now-a-days for John Bull to pretend—and he seems determined to wear them long enough in all conscience: but, though he has forsaken the national muse to attach himself with all the fervour of a renegade to her foreign sisters, I cannot help thinking, and hoping, that we shall yet see the day when he will be pleased to resume the more "ordinary" organs which naturally belong to him—when the strains "which pleased of yore the public ear" shall once more claim their ancient place in his estimation; and the manes of the exasperated mayoreess be appeased by the restoration of the long-exiled "simple ballad."

CORRESPONDENCE.

To the Editor of the Musical World.

I'll tell you what it is, Mr. Editor of the "Musical World"—that "Pickler Muskovy" Prince ought to be laid upon his back and double drummed for daring to insinuate that we Englishmen have no ears! List what he says:—"A soprano singing miserably out of tune, and we applaud to the skies! and the more the tenor makes a fool of himself by unmeaning roulades, the greater is our admiration!"

Now that, and be d—d to him, is an "enormous" lie, and he must know it, unless indeed he was in a state of Lefflerism every time he attended a theatre or a concert-room. As to some of the minor orchestras being a little energetic and crushing, a "p p" now and then, and being puzzled to play any louder when they come to a "crescendo ff," why, that, perhaps, is an amiable weakness which suits for indulgence; but then, thank Apollo, the musical fame of old England does not rest entirely upon their

* We opine that our late correspondent alludes to the Prince Pickler Muskau.—Editor.

shoulders. There is such a combination as a Philharmonic orchestra, and drafted from that body many other efficient and *feeling* orchestras who can, and often do, "attempt one of Mozart's overtures, and perform it too *without* playing it either in the wrong time, or with want of precision, energy, feeling, or any other of the detrimental wants" with which this "Count Smorltork" has stigmatised our musical capabilities.

It is no use disguising the matter, Mr. Editor of the "Musical World," but I *am* in a passion, and would fain swear by way of easing my choler, and so here goes—(I shall not write down what I say, because when a man swears he is apt to take the words just as the devil pitch-forks them up to him, and some of them don't look well upon paper)—so farewell for the present, when I have had my storm out I may perhaps trouble you again.
August 30th, 1839. Yours truly, C. SHARP.

P.S. He is quite right though about the rascally fiddlers and singers coming from all parts of the continent, and meeting with more patronage than the modest, deserving, and brilliant native talent. Look at the swarms of gnats and blue-bottles—French, Italian, and German, that beset a certain rich honeycomb at Pimlico, why, "cus'em," they not only prevent all taste for anybody else but will spoil the honey to all eternity. I wish the Queen V—— would exert her influence as Queen Bee, and hunt out the drones, or else give an equal share of the honey of her sweet countenance to those who feed and protect her. Confound this Pickler or Pickled Prince. What does he mean by saying—"we have no ears!"

To the Editor of the Musical World.

NORWICH FESTIVAL.

"Walk up, Ladies and Gentlemen; here's the wonderfulest Ourang-Outang ever imported. Only twopence."—*Tornbland Fair.*

Such, Mr. Editor, used to be the invitation in my young days at our Tornbland Fair—the then summit of all little boys' earthly felicity. I had feared, sir, that we should ne'er have heard that strain again; how rejoiced was I therefore to see the signature of such an authority as *Edward Taylor*, Gresham Professor of Music, and conductor of the *Norwich Musical Festival*, to a letter in the *Norwich papers* of last week. Sir, it actually has given me a new lease of my life. It recalled to my mind's eye those now obsolete delights of the once far-famed Tornbland. I saw Saunders in all the pomp and circumstance of his never-to-be-forgotten equestrian circle, strutting amid "his band," and "informing the public" through his speaking trumpet, that invitation which drew many a sixpence from our little boys' breeches' pocket. I also beheld Samwell, that prince of tight-rope dancers, in his plumed casque, vaunting his doings, while the gigantic woman and the learned pig, a great professor in his art, "thought it desirable that the public should possess further information with regard to the general scheme than the mere announcement their bills and circulars could supply." All these told you and with delight, for who does not like to hear or see himself praised, even if he does it himself, that "it had been *their* undeviating endeavour to build *their* reputation on a performance of the greatest masters" in their art—"that *their* bands were of the first rate excellence, and that *their* endeavours they hoped had not been ineffectual." The tight-rope of Mr. Samwell appeared to me to be the effusion of a mind proposing to itself things of the *highest* hope though of the hardest attempting. He used to rise instinctively rather than by effort or discipline. But let me not forget myself in "this contemplation of grandeur and awfulness, lest impressing my own mind with the scenes I would describe I clothe them in the imagination of my hearers with the same glowing colours under which they appeared in my own." But yet, sir, I cannot refrain from saying that the letter of Professor-Conductor Taylor induces me to hope that the time is coming when "his countrymen will learn to estimate as they ought the talents of this extraordinary man, and let him, I say, at least receive merited honour at our hands." "The concurrent testimony of public opinion sufficiently marks his character."

O ye drums, trumpets, fifes, fiddles, and cymbals of Tornbland Fair—rejoice. Oh! ye Samwells and Saunders—shades of departed greatness—shout. Behold that trumpet, which erst gave forth your own greatness, is wielded by worthy hands. It again sounds with voice potential your oft-repeated "Walk up, Ladies and Gentlemen!"

Tornbland Fair, August 26th, 1839. I am, Sir,

EVERY MAN HIS OWN TRUMPETER.

P.S. The Editor is referred to the *Norwich Mercury* sent herewith by the post.—[Which, Mr. Trumpeter, has not come to hand.—Ed.]

To the Editor of the Musical World.

Sir,—Amidst the general contempt for partial and exclusive systems which has been so justly said to distinguish this country at present, it is singular (or perhaps it is *not* singular)

that there should be found among the dilettanti of the day—the very *haute noblesse* of literature and art, a numerous class of persons advocating doctrines that for their ignorant and slavish exclusiveness have become the reproach of past ages and the contempt of the present.

"There is no despotism," says the philosopher, "like the despotism of words." The shibboleth with which these gentlemen have deceived themselves and would now do the same good office by the public is that of the old obsolete system of protected trade—"down with foreign monopolies"—"encouragement to the native artist"—"patronage from the court"—"support from the high places," &c., &c. Observe! these are not the doctrines of the poor "ignorant" mechanic—he has long since discarded them—they come from the high priests of the muses, from the innermost sanctuaries of the temple—they issue from the lofty interpreters of nature's laws, from those whose art "is not of this world." In translating their shibboleth for them, let us take an example from the arts of common life.—A is an English clothier who makes bad cloth. B is a Frenchman who makes good. The ports being open and the trade free the British can buy as much good French cloth as they like. The consequence is that A is quickly driven from the market. Finding himself worsted in the arena of fair competition, he now sets up the cry of "no foreign monopolies"—"Encouragement to the native manufacture." "If you do not 'encourage' me in making bad cloth," says he, "how can you ever expect me to make better;" that is, encourage a man in doing wrong, and he will do right immediately. But this is not all. A, while he denounces monopoly, is himself aiming at the grossest of all monopolies, for he calls out for prohibition to the good French cloth in order that he may fill the markets with his own worthless manufacture. Such is the true meaning of the catch-word "encouragement," and such are the principles put forth by a set of personages calling themselves the "British Musicians;" and mark! with what accuracy the parallel will hold between the composer and the clothier—for the latter, finding nobody will listen to his outcry for justice, at length begins to set his shoulder to the wheel in earnest. By rigidly scrutinizing the manufacture of his more successful rival he learns to improve his own; he now begins to get purchasers, the foreigner loses ground in the market, and our friend A at last discovers that by industry and perseverance he may in time get rid of him altogether. So with our "British Musicians." A poorer piece of business can hardly be conceived than the native musical drama of the day before the introduction, about fifteen years ago, of foreign operas to the English stage. This has given us some clever imitators of indifferent models, but it is quite certain that without it "English operas" could have continued to exist only to bring insolvency on all unfortunate managers who shall have attempted to work such a barren soil.

It would be libelling the more eminent of our musical writers to identify them with these slavish and anti-national outeries. They proceed chiefly from the Society of British Musicians and the young gentlemen from Tenterden Street, who, with their brows bound with their academical laurels, come on the town proclaiming themselves great geniuses, and calling out for the public money. There are also among them many vain and disappointed men, who, because they cannot write up to the public taste, fancy they are too great and original to be understood—"why are we not to have a national opera," exclaim these modest gentlemen, "as well as a national gallery?" So, because Parliament thinks fit, for the benefit of the public, to purchase those works of art which have passed the ordeal of ages, it is to do the same by every dauber of canvas and blotter of music-paper who chooses to call himself a genius. "If 20,000*l.* have been given for three pictures, why not for three operas?" "If the honourable House purchases Raphael's cartoons, why not Rodwell's music?" As for Royal Academies, the experience of the last seventy years has shown that they certainly do admirably well—"for those who do ill"—and hence these gentlemen's violent affection for them.—Yours, ASTYANAX.

Erratum in my last Letter.—After the word "produces," last line but three, insert the word "them."

THE SPANIEL OF DARMSTADT.

A new phenomenon has recently appeared in the musical world. Marvels of this kind are not uncommon, in the shape of little biped urchins, not yet out of petticoats, who execute variations upon the fourth string, and write fugues without knowing a note of music. But this novel phenomenon is of an entirely different order, being a modest quadruped of the canine race. Dogs have been occasionally observed, both in modern and past days, to show an extreme sensibility to music. On some of them, fine music has been known to produce an apparently painful effect, causing them gradually to become restless, to moan piteously, and, finally, to fly from the spot with every sign of suffering and distress.

Others have been seen to sit and listen to music with seeming delight, and even to go every Sunday to church with the obvious purpose of enjoying the solemn and powerful strains of the organ. All these displays, however, of musical tendencies on the part of the canine race, are as nothing in comparison with the following, which a recent German paper gives an account of, for the amusement of the world of harmony.

Frederick S—, a musical amateur of Darmstadt, in the grand duchy of Hesse, possesses a female spaniel, which has become a strange source of terror to all the mediocre musicians of the place and its vicinity. Having acquired a competency by commercial industry, Mr. S— retired from business, and devoted himself, heart and soul, to the daily and hourly enjoyment of his favourite science. Every member of his little household was by degrees involved more or less in the same occupation, and even the housemaid could in time bear a part in a chorus, or decipher a melody of Schubert. One individual alone in the family seemed to resist this musical entrancement; this was a small spaniel, the sole specimen of the canine race in the mansion. Mr. S— felt the impossibility of instilling the theory of sounds into the head of Poodle, but he firmly resolved to make the animal bear some part or other in the general domestic concert, and by perseverance, and the adoption of ingenious means, he attained his object. Every time that a false note escaped either from instrument or voice—as often as any blunder, of whatever kind, was committed by the members of the musical family (and such blunders were sometimes committed intentionally)—down came his master's cane upon the back of the unfortunate poodle, till she howled and growled again. By-and-by, simple menaces with the stick were substituted for blows, and at a still more advanced period of this extraordinary training, a mere glance of Mr. S—'s eye was sufficient to make the animal howl to admiration. In the end, poodle became so thoroughly acquainted with, and attentive to false notes and other musical barbarisms, that the slightest mistake of the kind was infallibly signalled by a yell from her, forming the most expressive commentary upon the misperformance.

When extended trials were made of the animal's acquirements, they were never found to fail, and Poodle became, what she still is, the most famous, impartial, and conscientious connoisseur in the duchy of Hesse. But, as may be imagined, her musical appreciation is entirely negative; if you sing with expression, and play with ability, she will remain cold and impassible. But let your execution exhibit the slightest defect, and you will have her instantly showing her teeth, whisking her tail, yelping, barking, and growling. At the present time there is not a concert or an opera at Darmstadt to which Mr. Frederick S— and his wonderful dog are not invited, or, at least, *the dog*. The voice of the prima donna, the instruments of the band, whether violin, clarionet, hautbois, or bugle—all of them must execute their parts in perfect harmony, otherwise Poodle looks at its master, erects its ear, shows its grinders, and howls outright. Old or new pieces, known or unknown to the dog, produce on it the same effect.

It must not be supposed that the discrimination of the creature is confined to the mere execution of musical compositions. Whatever may have been the case at the outset of its training, its present and perfected intelligence extends even to the secrets of composition. Thus, if a vicious modulation, or a false relation of parts, occurs in a piece of music, the animal shows symptoms of uneasy hesitation, and if the error be continued, will infallibly give the grand condemnatory howl. In short, Poodle is the terror of all the middling composers of Darmstadt, and a perfect nightmare to the imagination of all poor singers and players. Sometimes Mr. S— and his friends take a pleasure in annoying the canine critic, by emitting all sorts of discordant sounds from instrument and voice. On such occasions the creature loses all self-command, its eyes shoot forth fiery flashes, and long and frightful howls respond to the immelodious concert of the mischievous bipeds. But the latter must be careful not to go too far; for when the dog's patience is tried to excess, it becomes altogether wild, and flies fiercely at the tormentors and their instruments.

This dog's case is a very curious one, and the attendant phenomena not very easy of explanation. From the animal's power of discerning the correctness of musical composition, as well as of execution, one would be inclined to ima-

gine that Mr. S. in training his dog, had only called into play faculties existing (but latent) before, and that dogs have in them the natural germs of a fine musical ear. This seems more likely to be the case, than that the animal's perfect musical taste was wholly an acquirement, resulting from the training. However this may be, the Darmstadt dog is certainly a marvellous creature, and we are surprised that, in these exhibiting times, its powers have not been displayed on a wider stage. The operatic establishments of London and Paris might be greatly the better, perhaps, of a visit from the critical Poodle.

MUSICAL INTELLIGENCE.

PROVINCIAL.

[This department of the Musical World is compiled and abridged from the provincial press, and from the letters of our country correspondents. The editors of the M. W. are therefore not responsible for any matter of opinion it may contain, beyond what their editorial signature is appended to.]

SOUTHAMPTON.—We were doubly gratified on Tuesday last, first, at the splendid combination of musical talent presented to a Southampton audience, but principally that a most crowded assembly did that justice to Blagrove, which was denied to him last year. The concert was rich in the vocal department, but in the instrumental magnificent. Blagrove himself, the first violinist in England, adds to all the skill of his predecessors a feeling and expression of which many of them have been deficient. We had also the venerable Lindley—unapproachable on his instrument—producing the sweetest and highest tones of the violin upon his violoncello; luxuriating in the most delicate and most difficult passages—or expanding into the grandest tones of the organ. W. Blagrove's second violin was worthy of his brother's school; Mr. Truss's first tenor was brilliant and the second tenor of Mr. Baker's full of talent and judgment. The double bass of Guy deserved the crowd of talent by which he was encompassed, and the flute of Targett was in his best manner—combining the highest skill with a purity and distinction of tone, almost equalling his great master, Nicholson. To these we have to add the name of our own celebrated Philip Klitz, whose genius as a composer is acknowledged by the musical world, and whose brilliant execution and refined taste have obtained the highest encomiums of Herz—a merit rare indeed. He performed, on this occasion, upon one of the most splendid instruments we ever heard. The overture (*Fidelfio*) by all the instrumentalists, was an immense treat, but the greatest triumph in the concert was the grand trio (*Mayseder*) by Klitz, Blagrove, and Lindley. A more superb combination of musical skill has never been witnessed, and amidst the enthusiastic applause with which it was received, Klitz's piano was especially remarked. Blagrove's solo (of his own composition) was an exquisite performance, but his powers were most splendidly shown in *De Beriot's* fantasia, and threw his audience into ecstasies. The concluding septett (overture to *Oberon*) was finely played and happily terminated this brilliant concert.

CHESTER.—A numerous, and highly select and fashionable audience attended the late concert. Signor Tamburini's fine organ was in admirable order, and Madame Persiani as brilliant as ever. The latter sang the fine rondo from "*L'Elisir D'Amore*" in splendid style; and Mozart's duet, "*La ci darem*," by Persiani and Tamburini, was rapturously and most deservedly encored. Signor Folz's flute fantasias displayed great execution and brilliancy, with an absence, however, of the fine lower tones of the late Mr. Nicholson. Several overtures were given in good style, forming an agreeable change, by the band of the Chester Musical Society, conducted by Mr. T. Venables, and ably led by Mr. Gillins.

THEATRICAL SUMMARY.

Mr. Ducrow is imitating Lord Eglintoun on a small scale, poking, hewing, hacking, galloping, and all the other *ings* which enter into the composition of tilting—fooling not being forgotten.

At the English Opera House, Mr. Balfé having terminated his management, and with him Italian operas and operettæ having taken their flight, they are now enacting melo-dramas. So much for national opera.

The Strand rejoiceth exceedingly in the revival of *Othello*, not by *Act of Parliament*, which is a pleasanter affair than any of the new pieces to which they have treated us; and at the Surrey and Sadler's Wells there is the due proportion of raw-head and bloody-bone dramaticalities.

Miss Ellen Tree's first appearance since her return from America drew together

a house, bumper-full, at the Haymarket on Tuesday evening. She chose two parts for her *début*—the one *Viola* in Shakspeare's *Twelfth Night*—the other *Pauline* in a stupid domestic drama y'clept *The Ransom*. Her performance of the first was according to the usual stage version; and this is anything rather than a correct one. She described rather than impersonated *Viola*; a paradoxical assertion which we promise to explain to the uninitiated at a fitter opportunity. None so fit as the present, says the reader. We demur, and indeed flatly contradict him or her. We will explain this, too, but not now. Her delineation of the domestic melo-dramatic heroine was as commendable as that of *Viola* was the reverse. *Pauline*, being essentially prosaic, was elevated by the actress to the poetry of prose; Shakspeare's *Violet*, being essentially poetic, was degraded to the prose of poetry. This sentence is not very understandable; but it is the more profound for that. We will explain this too, but not now.

REVIEW.

Twelve Italian Melodies for the Violin, with Accompaniments for the Piano. Arranged by C. de Beriot. (Ewer.)

Let not our young violinists be frightened by the name of De Beriot; nothing can be simpler than these arrangements, which are at the same time tasteful, and calculated to form the style of beginners. Each air occupies a page, and they may be had singly. The piano accompaniment is just what it should be—rich enough to illustrate the text, without overcharging it. The airs are the following:—

- | | |
|--------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1 Non giova il sospirar. | 7 Mille Sospiri. |
| 2 Vanne al mio bene. | 8 Deb non voler costringere. |
| 3 Al dolce guidami. | 9 Come l'auretti placide. |
| 4 A torto ti lagni onor. | 10 Stanco di pascolar. |
| 5 E vezzoza si la Rosa. | 11 Quel suono. |
| 6 La Verginella. | 12 Prendimi teco. |

No. 1. *Oh! water for me.* Words from the *Metropolitan Magazine*. Music by F. Egan. (Egan, Kingston, Jamaica.)

No. 2. *The Tear.* Words by S. Rogers, Esq. Music by the same. (Jamaica.)

No. 1. "And wine for the tremulous debauchee"—but neither the poetry nor the music of this will do much service to the cause of tee-totalism. We have had in modern times many exceptions to Horace's dictum about the poetry of water-drinkers, but this piece will never cheat Bacchus of a votary; the music is quaint—but without originality—and the rhythm difficult to catch. It is waggishly dedicated to Lord Brougham.

No. 2. An inoffensive trifle—here and there betraying the novice.

Mr. Emanuel's "choice Italian," intended to have been particularly pointed out in our last week's notice, of what he styles "*La Bouquet*," was altered, as the proofs went through the reader's hands, into the commonly received orthography of the day. We now give it according to his more erudite spelling:—*Diminuendo; languida e tranquillo; giveoso; attaca; rall. e cres.; simplice; brillante; accelerando dal fine.*

MISCELLANEOUS.

Mrs. PRITCHARD, AND THE FIDDLER.—The celebrated actress, Mrs. Pritchard, having retired with her family, during the summer, into a country village, went one evening to see a play acted in a barn, in which she engaged one of the best and most conspicuous seats. The scenes of the little theatre were made of pasteboard; the clothes such as the manager could borrow or purchase; and the orchestra was filled with one single *crowdero*. The actors were uncelebrated, it is true, but they did their best; Mrs. Pritchard, however, instead of putting up

with such fare as the country afforded, laughed so loudly and incessantly at the business of the scene, that the rustic audience were offended. A spectator intimating to the fiddler, that he knew her,—that she was the great Mrs. Pritchard, of the Theatre-Royal in London,—“Then I’ll give her a hint presently,” said he; and immediately played the first tune in the “Beggars Opera :—”

“Through all the employments of life,
Each neighbour abuses his brother, &c.”

“Come, let us be gone,” said Mrs. Pritchard, “we are discovered; that fiddler is a clever fellow.” And, as she crossed over the stage to the door, she dropped him a courtesy, and thanked him for his seasonable admonition.

DEATH OF LAFONT.—France and the art have to deplore the premature end of a man doubly honoured by his character and his talent. The celebrated violinist, Lafont, died on the 23rd August, far from his family, the victim of an accident, the fatal consequences of which still more aggravate the responsibility incurred by its authors. M. Lafont went to take the waters at Cauterets, and had set out from Bagnères-de-Bigorres, for Tarbes, with his friend M. Henri Herz. It was during their journey that, by the imprudence of the postilion, the carriage upset, and the *artiste* seated in the cabriolet of the Imperial, had thus his body bruised by the commotion of the fall, which caused instant death. M. Henri Herz has shown under these circumstances the utmost zeal that devoted friendship could suggest; and after having rendered to his unhappy friend the last duties, hastened to return to Paris, where he soothed the grief of a widow and two children, who stood so much in need of his generous consolation. M. M. Labarre and Artôt, who were at the time in Bagnères, immediately started for Tarbes, together with M. Herz, to pay their unfortunate companion the last testimonies of sympathy and esteem. M. Lafont at the time of his death was about sixty years of age. Besides two operas which have been represented, one at Paris, in 1813, and the other at Hamburg, M. Lafont has composed seven concertos, fifteen airs with variations, as solos for the violin, twenty-two duos for violin and pianoforte, and more than two hundred romances. He was made Chevalier of the Legion of Honour, by Louis XVIII.

THALBERG AND DOHLER are both in this country, the former arrived from the continent on Saturday afternoon, and commenced a series of concerts in the provinces;—at Leamington on Monday, and Cheltenham on Tuesday last. He is accompanied by Ivanoff, Miss Birch, and Balfe. Thalberg’s retirement from public is certain after the present trip.

MADLLE. PAULINE GARCIA is at Boulogne, whence she is to proceed to and remain at Brussels until the opening of the Italian Theatre of Paris, where she is engaged for the impending season.

M. DE BERIOT arrived at Paris a few days ago. After giving in the course of eighteen days, thirteen concerts with Thalberg, these two celebrated *artistes* separated. De Beriot is proceeding to Russia, whence he will return to Paris in the winter of 1841.

DONIZETTI is now engaged in the composition of an opera for the Opera Comique of Paris. He has also a work in hand for the Theatre de la Renaissance.

ARROT, the violinist, and **M. Labarre**, the harpist, are making a tour together in the South of France.

KALKBRENNER is at Dieppe, suffering from an attack of gout.

MOSCHELES is staying at Boulogne.

HANDEL being requested, by Dr. Greene, to peruse and give his opinion of a solo anthem, which he had just composed, invited him to come and take coffee with him the next morning; when he would tell him what he thought of it. The Doctor was punctual at the time appointed; coffee was served, and a number of different topics discussed; but Handel avoided speaking of the anthem. At length the Doctor exclaimed, with an anxiety he could no longer conceal—“Well, sir, but my anthem: what is your opinion of it?” “Oh, your *anthem*—ah—why I did tink it wanted *air*, Dr. Greene.” “*Air*, sir?” “Yes, *air*; and, so I did hang it out of de window.”

On the 9th of September, 1605, a man was killed by a Protestant, in the Rue de la Harpe, at Paris, for singing the song, "De Colas." This song was composed by a seditious faction, with the intention of provoking the Huguenots, upon the subject of a cow, which had walked into one of their churches, during divine service, and which cow, for her impious intrusion, was condemned to suffer death. The sacrilegious animal having belonged to a very poor man, named Colas, a contribution was levied in every town and village of France, for his indemnification. The day after the murder, it was forbidden, under the penalty of being hanged, to sing this song in the streets, and it was dangerous even to hum the tune.

THE FIRST ITALIAN VOCAL PERFORMER that made a distinguished figure in London, was Valentini, a true, sensible singer at that time, but of a throat too weak to sustain those melodious warblings, for which the fair sex have since idolized his successors. However, this defect was so well supplied by his action, that his hearers bore with the absurdity of his singing his first part of *Turnus*, in *Camilla*, all in Italian, while every other character was sung and recited to him in English.

THE OPERA.—Rousseau defines the opera to be a dramatic, lyrical, and scenic representation, in which agreeable sensations are conveyed by the combined effect of all the fine arts, the poetry and action being addressed to the eye of the spectator.

LAPLANDERS, of all people on earth, have the least idea of music. Acerbi, the celebrated traveller, declares, that he was obliged to stop his ears whenever he heard a Laplander attempting to sing; a practice, however, from which, like bad singers in other countries, they cannot refrain.

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